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PEARLS.

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JAQUES & MARCUS,
JEWELERS,
857 BROADWAY, COR. 17TH STREET,
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THE DE VINNE PRESS.

No. 1.

PEARLS.

PEARLS, as seen in jewelry, are so familiar that one is apt to think of them but vaguely as the product of the pearl-oyster, and little thought is given to the causes which unite to produce them, or to the marvelous development of these daintiest of all jewels. A few words describing their formation may therefore prove interesting.

When the large pearl-oyster *(Meleagrina margaritifera)* is lying on the bottom of the sea, his beautiful shells parted to permit the influx of the food-particles which are brought to him by the tides and currents, he is liable to receive unwelcome substances, such

as small shell-fish, grains of sand, or bits of seaweed. These he usually ejects by the muscles and fibers which form his natural protection from such intruders. But occasionally an obstinate particle resists all attempts at ejectment, and, remaining, causes a constant irritation of the delicate substance of the oyster's flesh.

Unable to rid himself of the foreign body, he proceeds to render it innocuous by covering it with nacre, or carbonate of lime — the smooth substance of which his own iridescent shell is made — and thus a pearl is formed.

Pearls may be divided, for the purposes of this sketch, into two kinds: the pearl proper, and the pearly growths which are formed on the inner surface of the shell.

The true pearl is formed when the nucleus remains in the actual folds of the body of the oyster. In this case the nacre is deposited all around the nucleus (whether a grain of sand, or an ovum of the mollusk itself) in thin layers, so deftly applied that a solid perfect sphere is formed. Coat after coat of this lovely substance is added year by year, and thus the pearl increases in size. The second kind of pearl is formed when an intruding object lodges between the

No. 6.

flesh of the oyster and the shell. In this case the oyster, being only concerned about the surface which frets his body, overlays the irritant with pearl and secures it to the shell. In this way the attached pearls which seem to be growing up from the shell are developed.

These adhering pearls form peculiar excrescences and assume various singular shapes. At times they cover a tiny crab and are small and semi-spherical, looking exactly like a half pearl glued to the inner surface of the shell. Again, when a bit of seaweed is covered, there may be a formation several inches long, wavy and undulating, but glistening and bright as the pearl itself.

The illustrations of pearl-oyster shells printed herewith show some specimens from a wonderful collection which was secured by Messrs. Jaques & Marcus. These shells were collected by a lover of pearls during a period of thirty years. The protuberances on the inside, all showing the beautiful rainbow hues of the natural iridescence of the shells, were of such strange and singular forms that it occurred to him that they might be utilized by an artist to bring out some animal or human form. It was simply necessary to paint gauze wings on a pearl formation shaped like a caterpillar to give it

the appearance of a magnificent silvery dragon-fly. An elliptical one was readily furnished with fins and tail, and at once became a pearl "whale." Mermaids with protruding breasts and symmetrical bodies, birds, and other creatures, were skilfully painted on the insides of the curious shells, and each one of them became a work of art.

Each one of these shells, thus decorated, is a unique gem of beauty, with its many-colored rays of glowing light as a background, and a magnificent irregularly shaped pearl constitutes the central part of every picture.

No. 11.

CATALOGUE.

No. 1. POUTER PIGEONS.

The large pouter pigeon in the group here shown is a figure of unusual interest. The pearl which forms the body is a large hemisphere of great beauty. It stands boldly out from the shell, as will be seen in the illustration No. 1.

No. 2. MOTHER EARTH.

An allegorical picture representing a mother and three nursing children. The breast is formed by a natural pearl.

No. 3. CUPID.

Cupid stands at rest with bow and quiver, regarding the result of his last shot — two hearts transfixed by an arrow. The hearts are a natural pearl formation, but as perfect as if artificially carved.

No. 4. VENUS.

A LARGE open shell resting on the waves serves as a background for a beautifully painted figure of Venus. The breast is represented by an exquisite round pearl.

No. 5. MERMAID.

A SMALL shell representing a mythical marine scene—a mermaid disporting in the ocean. The figure is painted, but the breasts are natural pearls adhering to the shell.

No. 6. NEPTUNE.

NEPTUNE with crown and trident. The entire body is formed by a large lustrous pearl. The anatomy is suggested by the pearl growth. Illustration No. 6 shows this wonderful production of nature.

No. 7. MERMAN.

VERY little has been done by the artist to produce this picture—a head and arm merely being added in color. The natural pearl formation suggests the entire body perfectly, and stands in very high relief.

No. 8. APHRODITE.

A DOLPHIN supporting a shell in which is a kneeling figure of Venus. Twin pearls form the breasts of this charming figure.

No. 16.

No. 9. MERMAN.

THE body, shoulder, and part of the arm and tail of the merman are formed by a large pearl, uncommonly iridescent.

No. 10. MERMAID.

A MERMAID arranging her long tresses is the subject of this pleasing picture. Twin pearls form the breasts.

No. 11. VENUS.

A BEAUTIFUL figure of Venus, borne through the water by two sea-gods, makes a very pretty and interesting picture. Two pearls form the breasts of this figure. The picture is the subject of illustration No. 11.

No. 12. TERPSICHORE.

A DAINTY figure representing the "Muse of the Dance and Roundelay." The breasts are formed by two pearls.

No. 13. NIGHT.

A FIGURE of Night floating in the clouds—a city in the distance. The breast is a lovely pearl.

No. 14. ARIADNE.

SEATED on a tiger is a charming figure of Ariadne. Twin pearls form the breasts, and a third pearl makes a lily which grows by the roadside.

No. 15. RAM'S HEAD.

The very remarkable pearl growth in this shell stands in very bold relief. It represents perfectly a ram's head and neck. The artist simply added eyes and horns, and thus completed the picture.

No. 16. PHEASANT.

The largest pearl formation in the collection represents an English pheasant. The body, one leg, and part of the neck are in relief. The pearl is over five inches long, and is particularly lustrous. The illustration No. 16 gives an idea of this charming picture, but it is impossible to reproduce the luster and iridescence of the pearl.

No. 17. STAG.

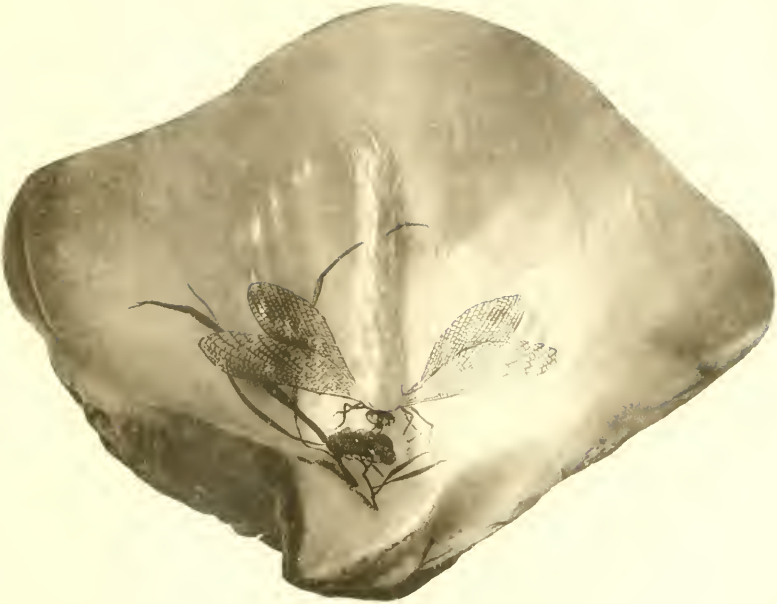
A large stag and doe, with background of Highland scenery. A pearl standing boldly out from the shell forms the head of the stag.

No. 18. PATRIARCH.

Here the weird pearl formation makes the head of an old man. The perfect profile and long flowing beard stand in high relief, and all that the artist has done is to paint in the background.

No. 19. PHEASANT.

This most attractive picture shows an English moor with low shrubs and weeds, and with a large white pheasant in the foreground. The entire body of the bird is one large, lustrous pearl.



No. 21.

No. 20. MERMAN.

A MERMAN with paddle. The body is formed by the natural pearl.

No. 21. DRAGON-FLY.

THIS is one of the most wonderful pieces in this unique collection. A sequence of nine pearls, as well graduated as if selected for the purpose, form the head and body of the dragon-fly. The addition of a delicate tracery of color for the wings, and a spear of grass, was all that was needed to complete the picture. The illustration No. 21 will give some idea of this wonderful piece.

No. 22. BACCHANTE.

A DANCING girl with cymbals. The pose is very graceful and natural. Two pearls form the breasts, which are partially concealed by the flowing robe.

No. 23. POUTER PIGEONS.

A GROUP of pouter pigeons, in which the pearl formation is uncommonly well adapted to the subject. The largest bird is almost entirely formed of pearl in very bold relief.

No. 24. ZINGARA.

THE figure in this shell represents a dancing girl with a tambourine. The draperies are painted in color, and the figure outlined on the shell. The breasts stand in relief, and are formed by remarkable twin pearls.

No. 25. WHALE.

A WHALE swimming in the ocean. A large pearl of great beauty suggested this subject. The addition of the waves was alone needed to complete the picture.

No. 26. MERMAN.

A MERMAN blowing a blast on a large sea-shell, which he uses as a horn. The entire body of the figure, and the rocks projecting out of the sea, are pearl formations.

No. 27. MERMAID.

A MERMAID seated on a strange sea-monster with a dolphin's head and a long serpentine tail. A pair of pearls form the breasts of the graceful figure of the sea nymph.

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